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SUBJECT Military Junta Purge of Businessmen and Army Officers

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**SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.**

1. On 3 March 1949 the National Office of Information and Publication issued a communique announcing the expulsion from Venezuela of Enrique Perez Dupuy, President of the Banco Venezolano de Credito; Angel Fernandez Rubio, businessman of the State of Zulia; and Angel Alamo Ibarra and Antonio Jose Diaz Martinez, both prominent and extremely wealthy businessmen of Caracas. The communique stated that this action had been taken as a disciplinary measure and that no plot against the government had been instigated by the individuals involved.
2. Enrique Perez Dupuy, whose political tendencies are definitely rightist, has been opposed to the last few governments of Venezuela and has been endeavoring to bring about the overthrow of the Military Junta and the annihilation of the Accion Democratica Party. His conspiratorial activities consisted in providing financial assistance to revolutionary elements, with particular emphasis on those within the Army. It is known that he supplied Angel Fernandez Rubio with 300,000 bolivares which the latter used to provide gifts, loans, and entertainment to Army officers.
3. In view of Perez Dupuy's reputation as a prominent banker, the Junta offered him the position of Ambassador to the United Kingdom in an effort to remove him from the country. When he refused that post, General Juan de Dios Celis Paredes, Governor of the Federal District, went to him on behalf of the Junta and told him that he would be expelled from Venezuela, but that he could return within "two or three months". General Celis Paredes stated that the Junta had enough evidence against him to incarcerate him, but that it preferred not to take such stringent action against him. The General added that Perez Dupuy was being expelled as an example to other businessmen in the country and as a warning to them not to interfere with the Junta.
4. Angel Fernandez Rubio was arrested and held for questioning by the Junta. He indicated that he was not completely in favor of the activities of Perez Dupuy and revealed to the Junta information about Perez Dupuy which was derogatory in nature. A member of the Junta indicated that Fernandez Rubio believes that Perez Dupuy double-crossed him, but did not say in what manner.
5. Concerning Angel Alamo Ibarra and Antonio Jose Diaz Martinez, it is not known in what way they were connected with the conspiratorial activities of Perez Dupuy. The Junta believes, however, that both men were working for the overthrow

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of the Junta and were against the Accion Democratica.

6. Coincidental with the expulsion of the above persons, a number of Army officers were arrested. Major Tomas Mendoza, commander of the La Guaira garrison, was called to Caracas where he was jailed on charges of having conspired with Perez Dupuy to overthrow the Junta and of having received money from Fernandez Rubio. With him were arrested some of his fellow officers who were loyal to him. Lt. Col. Isadore Castellano, commander of the Maiquetia airport in La Guaira, and Captain Raul Antonio Croce of the National Guard were arrested for their connection with the plot to oust Delgado Chalbaud.
7. A Lt. Col. Jesus M. Gmez Arellano,* who had been sent to the United States on a "special mission" by the Junta, was arrested upon his unexpected return to Venezuela in February 1949. Gmez Arellano had been sent out of the country because he had, as commander of the Maracay garrison, refused to support the military coup of 24 November 1948.
8. Venezuelan businessmen look with apprehension upon the expulsions, as they fear the Junta's purge may spread. Consequently, they have become much more reticent about their political opinions and have withdrawn their wholehearted support of the Junta.

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Comment. Information has been received which indicates Gmez Arellano has been conspiring with Lt. Col. Mario Vargas and a Mr. William Stevens of Miami, Florida, against the present Junta. This group wishes to place Romulo Callegos in the Presidency with a coalition cabinet and without the help of his old party, the Accion Democratica.

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